



Mount Rainier National Park News Release

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Kevin Bacher, Public Information Officer, Mount Rainier National Park
360-569-6131
Recorded information: 360-569-2211 ext. 9

The search for missing hiker Jeff Graves at Mount Rainier National Park concluded this afternoon when his body was found on Eagle Peak. Mr. Graves was spotted by helicopter at about 3:00 p.m. Ground searchers reached the location and confirmed the discovery about 4:00, and the extrication was completed by helicopter.

Today's events brought a sad end to almost three days of intense searching, which began on Sunday morning after Mr. Graves was reported overdue from a dayhike on Saturday evening. At its peak today, the search involved 60 individuals, including 20 ground teams and a helicopter. Poor visibility had kept the helicopter grounded until late morning on Monday.

Based on interviews with searchers, it appears that Mr. Graves left the trail on his descent from Eagle Peak in a steep, heavily forested area, then lost his footing and fell about 200 feet. He came to rest at the base of a 75 degree slope, hidden by the trees, about an eighth of a mile from the trail at an elevation of 4000 feet. (The approximate coordinates are 46.7500 degrees north, 121.7916 degrees west.) The weather at the time was cool, wet, and foggy.

Jeff Graves was 47 years old and an engineer at the manufacturing company Stratasys Inc. in Minneapolis, Minnesota. His wife, Randi, their seven-year-old son, and several other relatives were in the park when he was found. Jeff's mother, Ruth Graves, of Ypsilanti, Michigan, is serving her third year as a volunteer in the Longmire Museum and Jackson Visitor Center in the park.

The Eagle Peak Trail is a strenuous dayhike that climbs 3000 feet in 3.6 miles beginning at Longmire, in the southwest corner of Mount Rainier National Park. The area around the trail is rugged, heavily forested, and intersected by numerous cliffs and ravines.

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